

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DEC 15 1976

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

OCT 5 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Salaam Temple, also, The Mosque or The Mosque Theatre

AND/OR COMMON

(Newark Symphony Hall)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1020 Broad Street

CITY, TOWN

Newark

VICINITY OF

10

STATE

New Jersey

CODE

34

COUNTY

Essex

CODE

013

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT
☒ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☒ PUBLIC
☐ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED
☐ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
☒ ACCESSIBLE
☒ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO

PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ COMMERCIAL
☐ EDUCATIONAL
☒ ENTERTAINMENT
☐ GOVERNMENT
☐ INDUSTRIAL
☐ MILITARY
☐ MUSEUM
☐ PARK
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☒ OTHER: Performin Arts

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Newark

STREET & NUMBER

City Hall, 920 Broad Street

CITY, TOWN

Newark

VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Essex County Courthouse, Hall of Records

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Newark

STATE

New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

1975

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

P.O. Box 1420

CITY, TOWN

Trenton

STATE
New Jersey

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

___EXCELLENT
XGOOD
 ___FAIR

___DETERIORATED
 ___RUINS
 ___UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

___UNALTERED
XALTERED

CHECK ONE

XORIGINAL SITE
 ___MOVED DATE_____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The style of Newark Symphony Hall is clearly part of the Neo-Classical Revival which occurred in America during the early 20th century. The building has a simple uncomplicated facade composed of broad, plain wall surfaces, flat, unbroken roof lines and little ornamentation. The design motifs are an eclectic mix, primarily inspired from Greek and Egyptian examples with some Roman influence.

The facade is essentially hexastyle in antis. The fluted columns are of ionic order, and are surmounted by a full entablature with the inscription ".SALAAM .TEMPLE .AAONMS." on the otherwise unadorned frieze. The cornice has dentils and the cyma recta on the top of the cornice has 19 evenly spaced small adornments. The architrave has three stepped fasciae uninterrupted by mouldings.

The entablature is surmounted by two parapets which mimic those on Henry Bacon's Lincoln Memorial of 1922. The lower parapet extends the full width of the building and is topped by a simple cornice with a single row of stone blocks on top. Below the cornice runs a festoon of garlands with wide sprays in shallow relief. In the center of this parapet is a pointed, oval shaped shell ornament with a five pointed star in the center. Below and to each side of the shell are scrolled ornaments which sit on a low, long base.

The upper parapet is approximately five-sixth's the width of the lower parapet, approximately the same height, and set back from the front facade. Again, this parapet is capped by a simple cornice with a single row of stone blocks on top. Under the cornice is a decorated frieze. Below and separated from the frieze is a row of 12 plain circular medallions in relief.

The antas on either side of the facade have two pilasters each, delienating their edges. There is an unadorned doorway in each anta.

The broad plain walls are of limestone. These are stark and severe, their massive quality creating the appearance of a mausoleum. The limestone is cut into large rectangular blocks of ashlar, the blocks on the top parapet being the smaller.

The interior of Symphony Hall is "Classical Renaissance on a grand seale."¹ The 70 foot stage is flanked by two huge baroque doorways each framed by two wide, spiral fluted, ionic columns which support an elaborately ornamented and statued acroterion.

The walls enclosing the orchestra area are rimmed by arcades. These are surmounted by balconies with colonnades of corinthian columns. On the wall space between the arches are medallions. The colonnade supports a full entablature whose frieze is decorated with angelic figures separated by scroll work and panels. Between the columns hang chandliers of an art-nouveau style.

The friezes, capitals and most ornamantation inside are gold-leafed, while the balustrades and columns are carved from white marble. The carpeting is red. The total effect is very luxurious, almost opulent.

Since its completion in 1925, Newark Symphony Hall has undergone several changes and a major renovation although "the hall would still look familiar to any survivors of the first program." ²

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
— PREHISTORIC	— ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	— COMMUNITY PLANNING	— LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	— RELIGION
— 1400-1499	— ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	— CONSERVATION	— LAW	— SCIENCE
— 1500-1599	— AGRICULTURE	— ECONOMICS	— LITERATURE	— SCULPTURE
— 1600-1699	☒ ARCHITECTURE	— EDUCATION	— MILITARY	— SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
— 1700-1799	— ART	— ENGINEERING	☒ MUSIC	☒ THEATER
— 1800-1899	— COMMERCE	— EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	— PHILOSOPHY	— TRANSPORTATION
☒ 1900-	— COMMUNICATIONS	— INDUSTRY	— POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	☒ OTHER (SPECIFY)
		— INVENTION		dance
				opera

SPECIFIC DATES 1925

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Frank Grad, Henry Baechlin and George Backoff

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Newark Symphony Hall "occupies a central place in the cultural history of New Jersey; from the national perspective, it is one of the few surviving creations of an important era in American cultural development."¹ Seating 3,500 people, it is larger than Carnegie Hall, the Lincoln Center's Metropolitan Opera House or Philharmonic Hall in New York City. Tests in 1965 by Bell Telephone Laboratories in Murray Hill, New Jersey put Newark Symphony Hall's acoustics on a par with Boston's famed Symphony Hall and other major concert halls around the nation. Many conductors and artists such as Leonard Bernstein and Eugene Ormandy concur. The hall has extensive backstage facilities, a restaurant seating 2,000, numerous offices, and television studios. It would cost approximately 20 million dollars to duplication Symphony Hall today. While being an important part of the fabric of Newark, most importantly the hall epitomizes a unique booming and optimistic era in American history. Grand monuments of this scale are built by civilizations at an apex to celebrate and symbolize the permanence, power, spiritual energy, and affluence of that society. Newark Symphony Hall is such a monument to the Roaring Twenties.

Newark Symphony Hall, originally called the Salaam Temple, was designed by three architects, Frank Grad, Henry Baechlin and George Backoff, for the Ancient Arabic Order of the Nobles of the Mystic Shrine, more commonly known as the Shriners. The Shriners purchased the property for the building from the Packard Motor Car Co. of New York on July 26, 1920, and then transferred the deed in October to their own realty company, the Salaam Temple Realty Corporation. The Shriners broke ground for the Temple early in April, 1922. An inaugural performance was held on September 8, 1925, and the building was dedicated on October 3, 1925. The theatre in the temple was known as the "Mosque Theatre" (See photo #1, front cover of inaugural program).

At the dedication, it was announced that the architects had been commissioned to design an office tower to sit upon the present building (see photo #2, original model for Salaam Temple with tower). The tower, however, was not built for financial reasons.

When the Depression came, the hall suffered financial troubles, and was sold at a Sheriffs sale on March 3, 1933 to the Prudential Life Insurance Co. of America for \$100 plus the balance of a \$1,400,853.33 mortgage. The building was subsequently sold on October 26, 1942 to Frank Merrit, Anna Lois Waters and Newman H. Waters, all from Birmingham, Alabama. They held the building for two years until October 14, 1944, when it was sold to Radio Center Inc. for \$364,900, who in turn sold it to the city of Newark on October 5, 1964 for \$240,000 less \$46,500 in back taxes and unpaid water bills.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. The (Newark) Star Ledger, Volume 62, No.29, March 23, 1975 "Symphony Hall to Mark its 50th with Grand Gala" - Section 4, Page 11, by Michael Redmond.
2. Unpublished research paper by Flora Higgins, Librarian, Symphony Hall, Newark; an Annotated Bibliography, 1976.
(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA ^{1/8} acre

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,8 5,6,9 5,5,0 4,5,0,8 6,6,0
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B _____
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C _____

D _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
-------	------	--------	------

11 FORM PREPARED BY

(Terry Karschner, Historic Sites Section
609-292-2023)

NAME / TITLE

Peter Rubinstein, Architecture/Design Specialist

ORGANIZATION

DATE

New Jersey State Council on the Arts

August 17, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

27 West State Street

(609) 292-6130

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Trenton, New Jersey

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

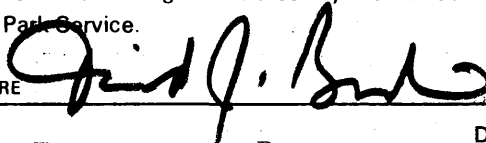
NATIONAL _____

STATE X

LOCAL _____

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



DATE November 23, 1976

TITLE

Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

12/5/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

New ark Symphony Hall

Newark

Essex County

New Jersey 034

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

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"The last major renovation, in 1965, cost \$200,000, not counting the later cost of air-conditioning the massive auditorium. The improvements which designer Alex Bennett Kahn made at that time did not substantially change the Shriners' eclectic mix of Greek and Egyptian motifs, and his impressive white, gold and red color scheme helped to unify the building." ²

The air conditioning was unobtrusively incorporated into the hall's decor by changing some of the ten round medallions on the side walls into duct openings, a change which has been barely perceptible.

"In addition to major structural repairs, Kahn designed the building's now-characteristic glass marquee, gave the hall's gargantuan chandelier its first thorough cleaning and burnished the gold-leaf fretwork which ornaments the balcony columns, carved from imported marble. The stage floor was completely rebuilt, and the orchestra "pit" widened somewhat." ²

"An up-to-date sound system and film projector system were also installed at that time, but there have been many technical advances since." ²

The original hall had black curtains with gold tassels between the colonade columns. These are now gone. The current golden curtain is also different from the original. To improve the hall's acoustics, "the rear of the stage was 'boxed' to concentrate sound into the auditorium." ³

The facade of the building also has had some changes since 1925. The most obvious difference is the addition of a metal and glass oval shaped marquee over the main entrance and similar cloth marquees over the doorways in each anta. Less obvious are the panels inserted between the columns to enclose the space behind them for offices and commercial space.

¹ Unpublished file of important buildings in Newark compiled by Donald Geyer, Architectural Historian. Available at Newark Public Library.

² The (Newark) Sunday Star Ledger, March 23, 1976, Section 4, page 11, "Symphony Hall" to mark its 50th with Grand Gala", by Michael Redmond.

³ Eugene Palatsky, unidentified article in clipping file at Newark Library, New Jersey Reference Room, Filed under "Newark Theatre", dated February 1965.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Newark Symphony Hall

Newark

Essex County

New Jersey 034

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

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From 1938 to 1958, Newark Symphony Hall "entered into a 20 year period of national fame the Griffith Music Foundation presented its concerts there. The foundation, a philanthropic 'empire' headed by the formidable Mrs. Parker O. Griffith, was single-handedly responsible for New Jersey's entry into American cultural life. On Mrs. Griffith's death in 1958, the foundation fell apart, but there is scarcely a musical institution in the Garden State which does not owe a great deal to Mrs. Griffith's indefatigable work".¹

"In addition to a program of high-level auditions for New Jersey musicians, the Griffith Foundation presented a concert series at Newark Symphony Hall. Hundreds of thousands of New Jersey school children received their first taste of the fine performing arts through the Griffith concerts, not to mention the general audience. Mrs. Griffith wanted only the best, and she got it: A dazzling trail of historic names, many of the greatest artists of the 20th century, performed on that stage".¹

"To list all is impossible, but consider....

Rachmaninoff, Paderewski, Artur Schnabel, Fritz Kreisler, Heifetz, Rubenstein, Horowitz, George Gerschwin, Menuhin... singers: Kirsten Flagstad, Helen Traubel, Jussi Bjoerling, Lily Pons...orchestras: Toscanini and the NBC Symphony Orchestra, Bruno Walter and the Columbia, Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia, the Boston, the Cleveland... The Metropolitan Opera National Company, the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo".¹

"After the Griffith era... the hall continued to sponsor an international artists series under the managements of Moe Septee and Mordecai Bauman, but mounting deficits forced the cancellation of the series in 1972. Since then, Symphony Hall has presented the state's leading performing ensembles, educational series, theatrical production, pop and rock concerts, films, ethnic programs and large civic gatherings".¹

¹ The (Newark) Sunday Star Ledger, March 23, 1975, section 4, page 11, "Symphony Hall to Mark its 50th with grand gala" by Michael Redmond.

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

New ark Symphony Hall

Newark

Essex County

New Jersey 031

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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3. Discussions with Donald Geyer, Architectural Historian specializing on Newark, also file card number 15-6-BA(x) from Mr. Geyers unpublished file of historic buildings in Newark, available at Newark Public Library.
4. The Architecture of Choice, Eclecticism in America, 1880-1930, by Walter C. Kidney, 1974, pages 167-171.
5. Essex County Courthouse, Hall of Records, the following books:
B86, pages 275 - 298, 1933
W100, pages 296 - 298, 1942
R104, page 569, 1944
4048, pages 462, 1964
6. Articles from Newark Evening News;
October 2, 1925, No. 12,988, page 7, "Jupiter's Frown Fails to Cloud Salaam Temple Dedicator's Ardor".

October 3, 1925, No. 12,989 page 1, "Princess of Desert in Tribal Array March on Mosque".

October 5, 1925, No. 12990, page 8 "Will begin Plans for Salaam Tower".
7. The Sunday Call, Newark, New Jersey, April 2, 1922, Volume L.I. No.2,603, Part III, Page 18, "Past Potentate Aronson Breaks Ground for the New Mosque of Salaam Temple".



Salaam Temple (Newark Symphony Hall)

8.

OCT 5 1977

Current photo of Newark Symphony Hall
facade

Photographer: Peter Rubinstein
17 Oxford Drive
Livingston, NJ 07039

#1 of 5

Negative Location: Same as above

Photo taken: May, 1976

DEC 15 1976

Camera direction, East Southeast

Essex County

2/3



Salaam Temple (Newark Symphony Hall)

7.

OCT 5 1977

Essex Co.

Photo of original facade

Photographer: Unknown

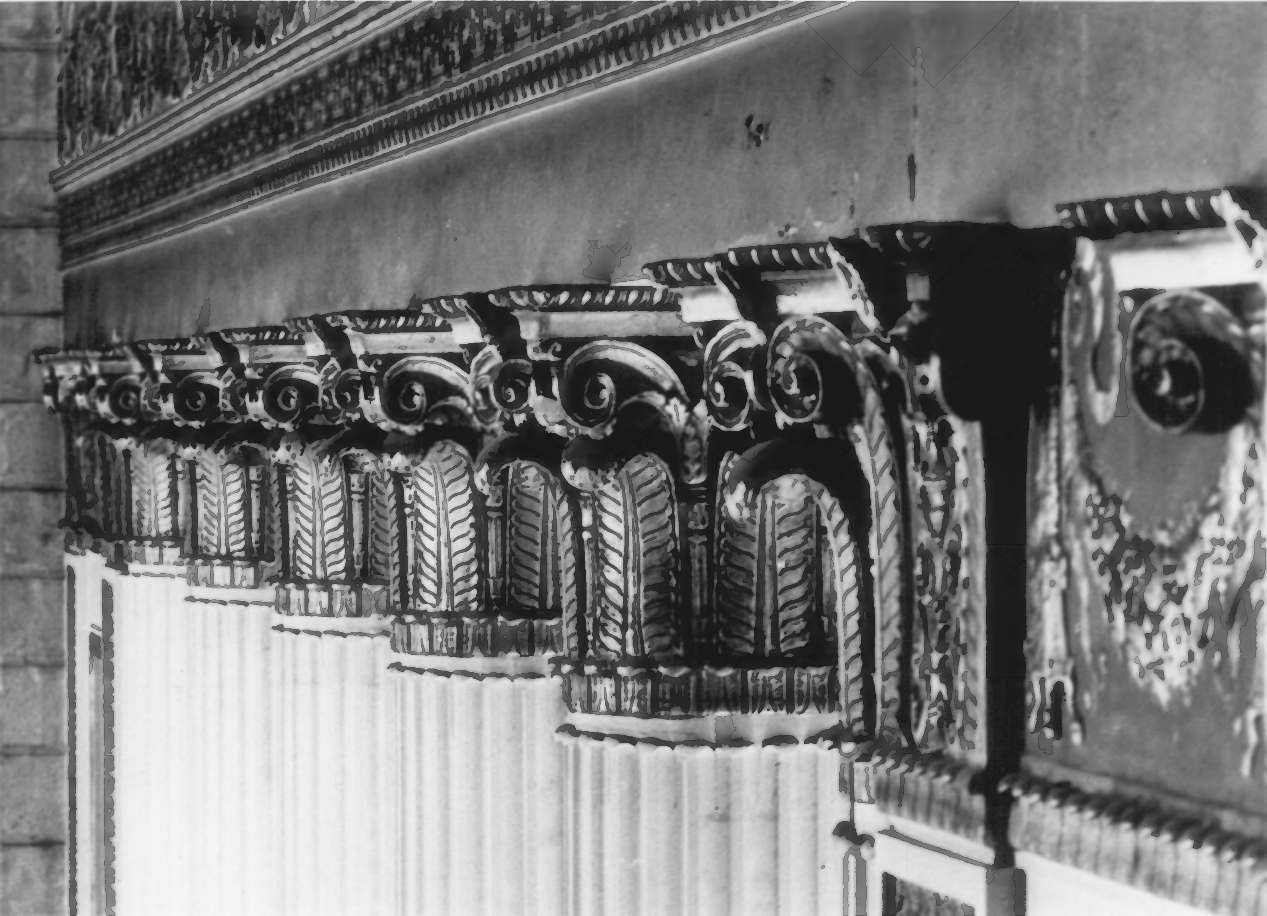
Negative Location: Newark Public Library,
New Jersey Room

Photo taken: Approximately 1925

#2 of 5

Camder direction, East

DEC 15 1976



Shlaam Temple (Newark Symphony Hall)
13. OCT 5 1977
Edsley Co.

Detail, tops of colonnade columns

Photographer: Peter Rubinstein

17 Oxford Drive

Livingston, NJ 07039

Negative Location: Same as above

Photo taken: May, 1976

Camera direction, Southeast

305
DEC 15 1976



Salomon Temple (Newark Symphony Hall)

12.

OCT 5 1977

Essex Co.

View of chandelier from stage

Photographer: Peter Rubinstein

17 Oxford Drive

Livingston, NJ 07039

#475

Negative Location: Same as above

DEC 15 1976

Phototaken: May, 1976

Camera direction, West Northwest and up



Salaam Temple (Newark Symphony Hall)

OCT 5 1977

Essex Co.

9.

View of Newark Symphony Hall, stage today

Photographer: Peter Rubinstein

17 Oxford Drive

Livingston, NJ 07039 #5875

Negative Location: Same as above

Photo taken: May, 1976

DEC 15 1976

Camera direction, East Southeast